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## COMING UP FOR AIR

**I**n retrospect, many of the issues that have occupied public attention for the past six months, since the collapse of Britain's negotiations to enter the Common Market, seem largely trivial and irrelevant.

It has been a hectic period of scandal, speculation and intrigue; at times it may almost seem as though the preoccupation with home politics was a deliberate attempt to postpone the day when the problems thrown up by the breakdown of the Brussels talks would have to be faced. Now, however, there are signs that the Government is coming up for air. With Mr. Macmillan reasserting his authority, and with a Labour landslide at the next general election no longer looking quite so inevitable as it did even a few weeks ago, the real issues of economic, foreign and military policy may at last receive the attention they deserve.

The need to look at British policy, in the light of the failure to become a member of the European Community, is made all the more urgent by the signs of a thaw in international relations. If Britain is to play an active role in exploiting the opportunities created by the Moscow test-ban agreement, we cannot go on acting as though Brussels had never happened.

At his Press conference on Monday President de Gaulle once again spelt out the basic, unresolved conflict between his view of the Western Alliance and that held by the "Anglo-Saxons." For British policy to be conducted on the assumption that this conflict can be ignored can lead only to another disillusioning fiasco.

The European Community, if it develops along the lines sketched out by President de Gaulle, is going to become increasingly self-contained. Militarily, it will dispose of its own nuclear deterrent—that of France. Economically, it will become more and more self-sufficient—with France gaining an outlet for her agricultural surpluses. Diplomatically, it will sit back sceptically watching negotiations between Russia and America.

That, at any rate, is how President de Gaulle sees it. It does not follow that the other members of the Community agree with him: his plans arouse much hostility, if only because they seem to be a means of averting French hegemony in Europe. But it would be dangerous to count on the willingness of the Five to risk smothering the Community in order to block President de Gaulle's plans—the ultimate threat which he holds out. As in the case of Britain's application, the Five may be forced to give way.

**B**UT if French policy to any extent prevails, certain clear and dangerous consequences follow. On grounds of expense alone, France may be tempted to involve West Germany in her H-bomb programme: this would bring about precisely the proliferation of nuclear weapons which Britain and the United States want to prevent. It is far from certain that even the offer of American nuclear know-how or equipment, now being discussed in Washington, would stop President de Gaulle.

America is insisting that, in return, France would have to accept some measure of integration with American policy—as Britain has done; and President de Gaulle has so far shown no sign whatever of accepting such conditions.

Economically the Gaullist concept of the Common Market runs counter not only to the ideas of its founders but also to the needs of the Western world. If Europe is to move towards self-sufficiency, at least as far as agriculture is concerned, present plans for increasing trade may be threatened; already America is feeling nervously defensive about the dollar, as President Kennedy's attempts to restrict investment abroad have shown. Hopes for tariff cuts the "Kennedy round"—could well fade away if Europe starts niggling too much about letting in American agricultural products.

If this were to happen Britain, who had hoped to extend her markets by joining the Community, would instead find them shrinking. Equally important, the underdeveloped countries would be seriously affected if Western trade policy were to become restrictionist instead of expansionary.

Diplomatically, too, the Gaullist approach contradicts that of Britain and the U.S. It may not matter all that much if France remains aloof from any negotiations with Russia. But it would matter if, in this respect, France were able to speak for Western Europe—and, in particular, for Germany—which is what President de Gaulle would hope to do. The effect of this would be to relegate negotiations to that far-distant day when, so de Gaulle believes, Russia will "rejoin Europe."

In all this it is Germany's role which is central to President de Gaulle's calculations. If the policies of France are more appealing to Germany than those of the U.S. and Britain he may get his way. Otherwise, he will be isolated and powerless.

**I**F, in the last resort, Germany were forced to choose between protection by the French or by the American nuclear deterrent, the issue could not be in doubt. But this is a difficult card for the U.S. to play: by threatening to withdraw from Europe she would reinforce the Gaullist argument that she cannot be relied upon to stay indefinitely.

In an attempt to reassure Germany and to prevent the growth of a Bonn-Paris nuclear alliance, America has put forward the proposal for a multilateral nuclear force. This would, it is argued, give Germany equal status with other members of the alliance and create an atmosphere of confidence. But it may well be that the same results can be achieved at less risk to the hopes of negotiating further agreements with Russia. And it is here that Britain could have an important role to play.

Even if Mr. Macmillan's argument that only Britain's nuclear deterrent guaranteed her a place at the Moscow talks could be accepted at face value, it does not follow that it will be a useful piece of diplomatic equipment in future negotiations. As a

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Eriander handed them over during his state visit in Moscow in 1956, the Soviet Government waited almost a year before stating in a memorandum that they had found no evidence of Wallenberg's detention in any prison. Only by chance a handwritten slip of a since deceased prison doctor, in which the latter asks Security Chief Abakumov, since liquidated as an enemy of the state, what he should do with the body of a dead prisoner. Abakumov wrote on this slip: "Hold no inquest. Cremate!" This prisoner, concluded the memorandum's author, must have been Wallenberg.

Orally the Soviet spokesman stated: "We doubted the correctness of this conclusion, since there is no evidence that the diplomat was ever in Russian captivity."

The Foreign Minister of Sweden referred to the eyewitnesses, according to whom Wallenberg was in Soviet prisons at much later dates than "date of death" named in the memorandum of 1957, even in the sixties. "The work for the rescue of Wallenberg goes on," said Sweden's now foreign minister.

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second-class nuclear Power, Britain will always be clinging to America's coat-tail. As the first Power to have renounced nuclear weapons, this country would be in a position to take an independent initiative.

In particular, Britain could insist that what really matters is for members of the Western Alliance to have a voice in the shaping of American policy. So long as it appears that only the possession of nuclear weapons guarantees such an influence, the Gaullist argument may sound convincing in German ears. Once it becomes apparent that it is possible to have influence without

necessarily owning nuclear weapons, it will sound far less persuasive.

Britain could thus challenge the whole Gaullist approach at its weakest point: the anachronistic assumption that, whether in military, diplomatic or economic matters, there is a European interest which can be pursued independently from the interests of the Atlantic Alliance as a whole. Britain should be urging a realistic Atlantic strategy which would recognise America's supremacy within the alliance while seeking ways of giving its other members a voice in decision-making.